

The Library Assistant:

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EDITORIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Annual Meeting of the Association will be held on **Wednesday, June 16th**, at **University College**, Gower Street, W. For the afternoon the Council has engaged the well-known Dickens lecturer, Mr. W. J. Roffey, to conduct members through Dickens byways to the Dickens House, 48, Doughty Street, W.C.1.

Here the extremely interesting Dickensiana will be explained by an old friend of the Association in the person of the Hon. Librarian, Mr. F. W. T. Lange, F.L.A. The party will then go to a local café for tea, which Mr. Lange has very generously undertaken to provide. A further visit of interest will be an evening tour of the libraries of University College.

The time table will be as follows:—

2.30 p.m.—Meet outside National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, and proceed to Adelphi Arches, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Prince Henry's Rooms, and Staple Inn.

4.20 p.m.—Dickens House, and tea at 5.

6.30 p.m.—Tour of University College Libraries, and refreshments at 7.

7.30 p.m.—Annual Meeting.

It is essential that members who wish to be present at tea or at evening refreshments should write by June 12th, to Mr. R. Wright, 378, Garratt Lane, S.W.18.

A **Sunday Ramble** will be held by the Association on June 20th, if day excursion tickets are available. Members may obtain, at Liverpool Street, a ticket for the train that leaves for Broxbourne at 10.42 and arrives at 10.59, and available for return from Potter's Bar to King's Cross. The return trains leave at

7.5 and 7.39. Luncheon should be brought. Tea will be obtained *en route*. Members who hope to be present should write by June 16th, to Mr. R. Wright, 378, Garratt Lane, S.W.18. If cheap tickets are not then available members will be informed of the cancellation of the arrangements.

Work of the Council.—The Council met at the St. Bride Institute, Fleet Street, on May 19th, at 3 p.m., when Divisional representatives present included Messrs. Burton, Cashmore, and Chubb, from the Midland, Messrs. Briggs and Hurford from the North-Eastern, and Miss Gerard from the South Coast. Mr. Muskett, of the Yorkshire Division, was also present throughout the proceedings, and after the interval, Mr. W. Benson Thorne, accompanied by Mrs. and Miss Thorne, were interested onlookers.

The completion of last minute arrangements for an Italian tour somewhat delayed the President (Mr. H. A. Sharp), and until his arrival the chair was worthily occupied by Mr. Briggs.

On the suggestion of Mr. Hurford, the Press and Publications Committee obtained the Council's sanction to print the Annual Report and its attached lists of members and meetings apart from the June issue of the journal. The Education Committee appeared to have arrangements for future meetings well in hand, although railway restrictions seemed likely to cause hurried alterations to the Reading arrangements for the following week. It may be of interest in passing, to note that Mr. Desmond McCarthy, well-known to so many listeners-in has promised to address the Association at the Inaugural Meeting of the next session.

The item on the agenda which occupied most time and thought was the report of the Special Committee which has been formulating a scheme of classes for members of the Association. In this discussion the practical experience of several Divisional representatives proved of tremendous value, and from the Annual Report, members will be able to judge for themselves the result of this Committee's labours. Here, we think it incumbent on us to point out that it should be every member's privilege and duty to see that his or her colleagues are kept fully informed of the tremendous advantage to be derived from membership of the A.A.L. once these classes are under way. For so long the canvasser for new members has met with the question "What advantage does membership of the A.A.L. bring?" that to be able to point out a definite practical financial advantage should cause the membership to leave the thousand mark well behind.

The resignation of the Hon. Treasurer, noted in the Annual Report, was received at this meeting, and despite the fact that the Association is undoubtedly fortunate in having secured Mr. Sandry to fill the breach, genuine regret was expressed by everyone present at Mr. Cooper's severance with an office he has

so worthily filled. Eloquent tributes to his work were made by Messrs. Chubb and Briggs, speaking from their experience as Divisional Treasurers.

A resolution was received from the North-Eastern Division in which the opinion was expressed that subscriptions should be governed by salary instead of age. Several members with experience as Treasurers of Divisions spoke of the difficulties that would undoubtedly accrue, and the Council was ultimately unanimous in deciding to take no action.

Mention should be made of the fact that it transpired in accepting resignations, that two lady members of the Midland Division are about to take up positions in the Toronto Public Library. To them, naturally, the Council wished "Bon Voyage" and Good Luck. Although a small saving may be effected on the printing bill by there being no election this year, for London councillors, these contests usually denote a healthy spirit, and we must hope that the election will be necessary again next year. This year the withdrawals are balanced exactly by those seeking election.

"**Books and Reading**" is the title of a book by Major W. E. Simnett, shortly to be published by Messrs. G. Allen and Unwin.

Obituary.—We regret to announce the death of Mr. George Fairburn, an assistant in the University Library, St. Andrew's, through a cycling accident. His chief says, "Mr. Fairburn was but twenty years of age, but I had grown to value him, and he was a most loyal and zealous worker."

We tender our sincerest sympathy to the bereaved parents.

An Appeal.—The session which is just closing has, we think, been memorable chiefly for the meetings, the increased membership and the evident virility of the Association. Yet we are not satisfied. We take this opportunity to address an appeal to all our members to do even more than they are doing at present to ensure the continued health and prosperity of this Association. The ways are many. Do not be diffident in the least about pushing the merits of the Association among the new or apathetic assistant. Enthusiasm is the keynote of success; one enthusiastic member will soon cause others to take an interest in the work. Indicate very clearly to all those who are outside the Association that they are not and cannot be taking a full and complete interest in their profession whilst they remain outside the fold. The Honorary Secretary will be only too pleased to send all enquirers copies of the leaflet "Ten Reasons why You should join the A.A.L."

The discussions at our meetings have invariably been good, and we have noted a number of new speakers, but even on this point we are not convinced that the discussions are as lengthy as

they might be. No paper ought to go unchallenged. No subject ought to be considered to have reached the point where there is really nothing more to say. That way lies stagnation. We want to see even fuller, and, if we may say so, fiercer discussions. Every subject should be debated hotly; all kinds of views presented and thrashed out. In so doing assistants will fit themselves to carry on the work of leading rather than following.

Next season we hope to be flooded with offers of papers. There are very many matters that need discussing at length, problems that will soon beset us, and it is up to the members of this Association to be not with the times, but ahead of them. Look around you, examine the practices and methods of to-day, estimate what is likely to happen in the future, and if you are convinced that some things are wrong or need radical changes, write a paper and read it before the Association. Thoughts and ideas retained and held fast within your own mind are of no use to the profession; they should be given life in speech and writing.

A.A.L. Series.—All enquiries should be addressed to Mr. W. Benson Thorne, Bromley Library, Brunswick Street, Poplar, E.14.

Norwich.—We note, with appreciation, the following reference to the A.A.L. in the Norwich Public Libraries' Report, 1925-26: "By means of this Association assistants at Norwich have had opportunities of meeting and discussing subjects of professional interest with members of the staffs of the Public Libraries at Ipswich, Yarmouth and Lowestoft."

THE VALUE OF ASSOCIATION.¹

By G. L. BURTON, Birmingham Public Libraries.

I suppose retrospection is a very common characteristic of human nature, and there must be times when we all look back and attempt to review past events, as it were—particularly those events which have perhaps had some influence upon our outlook on life. Some of the impressions we so make upon the mirror of the mind we love to linger over, for the memory of them is sweet, but there may be others that we would not look upon, and we let them hurry by. That has been my own experience within the last few days, for I have been letting my mind wander back into the past. I thought of others who had preceded me—great names now—and I realised that I had a great tradition to maintain. I thought of Mr. Chubb's address last year at Coventry, on our educational need, and the very practical outcome of the scheme he placed before us. It was something achieved. Mr. Chubb so far as this Association is concerned, at any rate, made history, and I must play my part.

¹ Substance of an address delivered before the Midland Division.

I want to talk to you for a little while on a subject which, in a way, is rather outside the sphere of those things appertaining to Librarianship. I hope I may be pardoned for that, but it is perhaps good for us to leave occasionally on one side such questions as classification, book-selection, and the more professional matters that are our daily need. I would rather, for to-night, try and bring to your notice one or two ideas concerning the value of association, first of all in a more or less general sense, and then concluding with some special reference to our own Association.

Why do we have associations? What are they for? Is their purpose more than a pleasant social gathering—a temporary thing, enjoyed for the moment and then forgotten—or has it a more lasting significance—does it live on when the gathered company has dispersed, and the last “good-night” spoken? Those are questions over which we might well ponder. If we ask the psychologist he will tell us that men and women are by their natures, social beings, and that they must congregate together when moved by a common purpose. That is true, of course. The bonds of fellowship which bind together people whose minds are turned towards the same ideal are the great connecting links in the chain of progress. A great football crowd, for instance, thinks as one mind. It will cheer as with one voice the clever performance of a player, or level its contempt and indignation in perfect unanimity at a piece of bad play. The individual is lost in the crowd; the thoughts, the hopes, the aspirations of the individuals comprising the crowd become merged in the collective thought, the combined hope, the common aspiration of the group, and that, in a word, is the fundamental basis of all associations.

Now, let me for a moment or so, suggest to you one or two different types of association that may be called into being. First of all, there is that very primitive type of association, the individual members of which have no connection at all with each other. A street accident, or a house on fire, for instance, will draw together a large crowd of people merely out of curiosity to see what is happening, and because of a love for excitement. There you have one kind of passing association—casual, unpremeditated, and possessing nothing that is binding in its nature, except the common motive which will soon be over and done with.

The second type of association, and one that is certainly of a higher moral and intellectual order, is that of which I have already given you an illustration, namely, the football crowd, or the theatre audience. In this case, the association comes into being for an hour or so, and in an hour will have passed away. The time and place and procedure are predetermined, it is true, and in this respect it is an organised association, yet the purpose—and

that is the main thing after all—may be only a trivial thing in the life of each member of the group, or crowd, or association. There is no common interest to bind them together in lasting union. The motive is purely spectacular, and therefore selfish. There may be a consciousness of similar purpose in meeting together, but it finds only momentary expression. Just in the same way, we might have an association which is formed in order to celebrate a historic event, to commemorate the birth or death of a great poet. If such an event is only the excuse for a good dinner and an evening's entertainment, then it is on the same level as the football crowd or the theatre audience. It is merely of a spectacular character and therefore selfish and narrow in its purpose.

If, on the other hand, the people gathered together for such an occasion have in mind the desire to disseminate knowledge, and to bring to the lives of others a deeper love and reverence for the person or event they celebrate, then the association thus formed will possess a greater value, and the end achieved will be all the more worth while. That brings me to the third type of association which is formed for some specific purpose, and which, when the purpose aimed at is accomplished, automatically ceases to be. Political and social organisations which are more or less of a temporary character, fall within this group. We have associations, for instance, which are brought into being for the achievement of some social reform, yet when the reform, is established, the need for the association pursues its own dissolution. When slavery was abolished, the associations for the abolition of slavery were abolished also. As someone¹ has pointed out, every association dies of its own success.

Now, perhaps you will wonder where all this is leading, and what connection or interest it can have for our meeting to-night.

Well, the idea in my mind in bringing such a subject to your notice, is just this—

There is another type of association to which I have not referred—a kind of association which possesses qualities and values far above any I have mentioned; whose activities are broader and more lasting, and whose final purpose can never be reached. I refer to the type of association such as our own (I say it with all humility) which is of a permanent character, and which must live on because the need that called it into being will be present with us so long as we can still believe in ourselves, and in the work we have set out to do.

For you see the thing that lifts associations like ours above

¹ Maciver. *Community*, p. 26.

the level of those other organisations which are for the moment, the year, or even perhaps the decade only, is the knowledge that we go on and on in the service we perform, we shall change continually, yet always remain a unity.

Have you ever thought of it like that? Have you ever asked yourselves what membership of an association like ours might mean if views along the lines I am trying to suggest? Is our regard for the Association merely of the casual order? Are we attracted just for curiosity—to see what is happening, or is likely to happen—or for the possibility of excitement? If so, then we are dragging it down to the level of the crowd attracted by a row in the street or a house on fire.

Or again, is it just the spectacular element—the desire to be amused and entertained—that attracts us? If so, then again we are doomed to bitter disappointment, and we are in exactly the position of the man who goes to a football match or a theatre.

“The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars

But in ourselves, that we are underlings.”

I am well aware that there is no one here who feels like that, yet I would suggest that there may be some who would do well to ask themselves—“What am I giving to the Association?” and not so much—“What am I getting out of it?” The future of any organisation, of any movement, depends absolutely upon the attitude of mind of the members.

I do not wish to appear unduly pessimistic, yet if we feel that a particular meeting has not been very exciting, we are surely only looking at the temporal aspect. Can we not feel that while the meeting itself in an hour's time will have become a memory, the purpose that called us together will remain with us.

It is easy to be critical, and the cynic is ever at our elbow waiting to encourage us in the gentle art of mud-slinging if we are only ready to take heed of him:—

“Two men looked out from prison bars

The one saw mud, the other stars.”

There is your answer to the cynic. We who are librarians and library assistants know the nobility of service. Ours is a worthy calling. We do not trouble ourselves with the cynic. We can say with Browning:—

“The common problem, yours, mine, everyone's,

Is not to fancy what were fair in life

Provided it could be—but finding first

What may be, then find how to make it fair

Up to our means—a very different thing!”

We can look out and see stars, because we deal in books, and books are stars—great books are stars that can never be dimmed. We have spoken about the nobility of our calling. I mean that.

When you consider that it is our business to provide information for all classes of the community—to guide their reading, to lead their thoughts along nobler channels, then I think you agree with me that there is hardly a grander task to which we might set our hearts and hands than that.

While it is necessary for us to assist the commercial man and the student, we must not forget that great crowd of people who find in books only the thoughts of great men and women, and who are content to wander round the shelves. If we have the real love for our job, then we shall be those who are eager to pass on those treasured thoughts. In doing that we shall be "linking the present to the past, and both to the future" and binding together the scattered threads of thought. Our meeting together occasionally like this should be the means of bringing newer thoughts and newer strength to the work we do.

Of course, I know it is sometimes said—it is a kind of cult with some people—that in order to get the best out of life it is necessary to leave the crowded thoroughfares, and go out alone on to the quiet mountain side, or into the trackless desert. In such places, so we are told, in the quiet solitude, men may think. This may be true at times, when rest and quiet are needed, but I for one believe that the really great work of the world is done where men and women congregate together. The man who is always wanting to get away from things, is a bit of a crank, I think. We may be sorry for him, but let him go to his desert island or his mountain top—he will not be missed by many of us.

Have you ever seriously thought what our mission in life is? We provide our fellows with the material for great thinking, for books that do not make people think are not worth reading.

And that is why we have an association—to fit us better for that task. We can meet together and talk and share our views, and then that great, kindly, but sometimes rather trying, personage—the British Public—will scratch its wise old head, and say—"These people know something of their job after all—they are not like the little wound-up automatic machines we used to think them, passing books backwards and forwards over the counters.

They have got souls: they have thought about what they are doing. I shall find with them the guidance and the help I need." And as a result a little honour and praise will be ours.

If we are only out for what we can get we shall spoil the best association. But if our ideal is an honest and sincere desire to put our best into the movement—it may be only a very little we can do—then there is no limit to what we may accomplish. But we must work together. We may not always agree among ourselves, but that does not matter. The will to disagree frankly

and openly has an ennobling influence. It keeps us on the alert, and prevents our slipping into ruts and narrow grooves, for someone has said that there is very little difference between a *groove* and a *grave*—it is only a question of depth.

In this connection there is another thought I should like to leave with you. It is this. Should it not be our ambition to try and cultivate an all round interest in our association? By that, I mean that there may be a danger of our becoming highbrowish. We may affect the air of only being interested in papers and the business side of our activities. Now I will be bold enough to submit to you that to adopt that attitude of mind is just as one-sided as to join an association for what little personal enjoyment one may get.

No, my friends, what we have to do is to try and enter into every aspect—to realise that it is the individual who can attend an ordinary business meeting and enjoy it, who really gets the most out of a social evening, dance, or a theatre party. These social events are necessary and vital to the fuller development of an association's possibilities. We cannot do without them. They keep us fresh and prevent us from taking life too seriously. They add that little touch of humour without which the more serious affairs of an everyday day would weigh too heavily upon us. But sad is the lot of that man or woman who cannot see beyond the lighter gaiety of the moment, and to whom the calls of service have lost their appeal. It is this all round view of things I want to emphasise—that the strength of an association depends absolutely upon the hearty co-operation of all members in all efforts toward the common good. If that is our honest desire, and we are prepared to share the responsibility it brings to us, then we shall be helping each other. Strength to go on will be ours, and the will to accomplish great things: we shall know what it is to "greet the unseen with a cheer."

I can fancy I hear some of you saying—"It's all very well for you to talk like that, but what can I do? I cannot do this; I should like to, but I cannot.

"Tis not what man does which exalts him, but what man would do!"

Well, if you wanted me to answer that question, I should say that none of us can really judge what we are able to do. It may be that someone comes to a meeting and hardly takes any active part in the proceedings: yet I believe that if that someone attends a meeting in the right spirit—if he or she feels that the mere meeting together of people who have the same ideals and ambitions in mind is really worth while, and that all may share in the joy of such a gathering—then the contribution made will be a noble one. For we must remember that those people who do all the talking

only contribute their share. The soul of an association is equally with all those whose thoughts are turned towards the common good, although the thoughts may very rarely find expression.

Now there is a kind of adventure about this sort of thing—a romance in it, if we can only find something of that spirit of adventure which lies at the root of life itself, and without which the mind of man would never have groped its way out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of knowledge and understanding.

"THE LIBRARY WORLD" AND THE ASSISTANT.

In these dark and troublous days, happy indeed is that man who adds a little to the gaiety of nations. Such a one is our dear old hoary-headed friend Callimachus of the "Library World." A month or two ago we had the temerity to cross swords with the doughty Eratosthenes and even to enter into his ancient province of the ridiculous. Now his brother Cyrenian comes to his aid; jealous no doubt of the imperfectibility of the ancients. "Callimachus, acid myrtle sweet"; true, true, but we fear that in the last number of the "Library World" he has shown more of gall than honey. "In most of his work" writes a brilliant translator, "there is a flavour of bitterness, a frown of conscious arrogance, a harsh note of intolerant criticism." This of the ancient sage. Our friend of the "Library World" does not find much difficulty in coming up to this level. He bears with ill-disguised patience the remarks of several writers, but when he comes to our observations in the previous number of the "Assistant" his patience and his temper, go. Rage, not reason, can only account for such a "Daily Mail" heading as "Imbecility." It was uppermost in his mind perhaps. And yet, the facts are just the same. This extravagant word is no magician's wand. Personalities and librarians are not mutually inclusive terms. We *have* actually known personalities and the libraries they have administered. And we say again, quite unmoved, the result—another idol shattered. My Grecian friend never thought, and we hope will not think, that we have no love, no respect, no admiration for these personalities. Far be it from us any such intention. As personalities they command usually most unbounded affection; but as librarians—here the exercise of judgment must be used with that casting out of all preferences essential to a sound verdict. We remember reading quite recently an excellent review of a life of the charming personality Francis Jenkinson of Cambridge. The reviewer paid all and full tribute to the endearing qualities of Jenkinson, and

to his sound scholarship and ripe learning ; but of his quality as a librarian, *per se*, he candidly admitted, to put it kindly, he was a failure. The truth is Callimachus a personality would be equally a personality were he a librarian, a shoe-maker, or even an editor. The next step (and here again we are unrepentant) we repeat "that which the moment requires 'the moment for itself creates.' " And we go further and claim that your statement "Great men have always made great events, and not events great men" is one of those half truths (at the best) and one which if persisted in, leads often into a dangerous fallacy. Besides, an elementary knowledge of history will refute your statement.

We know that Great Mind and Impatient Sage, Thomas Carlyle, worked the theory to its death. But he, like Callimachus, had no scientific interest in the past. A great movement lives, not in any single life, but in the ideas it brings into the world and leaves growing in the minds of men. History, as it is written now, is no longer an account of never-ending "dog-fights." It is rather a record of the ordinary, common or garden folk of the day—and their daily doings ; these are the real events that make history. The Great Man surely is he who takes these events and leads them to a glorious end and along a noble path. He certainly does not make the events. We have yet to learn that Napoleon made the French Revolution ; did not the opportunity of the French Revolution make Napoleon ? Opportunity is the thing, and the ability and readiness to take it when it comes. No, no, my dear "Battiades" drop your rustic habits and even if your anger does get the better of you remember you really *are* Callimachus. S.P.C.

P.S. Humour is a matter of taste ; the failure to see even an obvious attempt at it may be a sign of profound learning ; it certainly betrays the want of a little humanity. Has C. ever heard of Dr. Peter Pangloss ?

THE DIVISIONS.

MIDLAND DIVISION.

The Sixth meeting of the Session was held at Nuneaton, on April 21st, 1926.

Assembling at 2.30 p.m. at Nuneaton Station, members were welcomed by the Librarian of Nuneaton (Mr. B. Moreton), who conducted the party through the Nuneaton part of the "George Eliot country." The first place visited was Chilvers Coton Church (the Shepperton Church of George Eliot), where members were received by the Rev. Canon Dodds, who conducted them round the church and explained its associations with the famous novelist and some of her characters. Leaving Chilvers Coton, the party proceeded to Griff House, where George Eliot's childhood was spent. Other places associated with George Eliot and her novels were pointed out by Mr. Moreton during the walk back to Nuneaton, where tea was taken at Birch's Café.

At the evening meeting, held at Birch's Café, Mr. G. L. Burton presided

over an attendance of 25 members. In opening the meeting, the Chairman referred to the impending departure of Miss Proctor and Miss Lloyd of the Reference Library, Birmingham, who had secured appointments in Canada, and in the name of the Division, he tendered to them good wishes for happiness and success in their future work.

Miss M. G. Baker (Birmingham) then read her paper on "The Life and Work of George Eliot," in which she dealt with the chief incidents in the novelist's life, and then passed on to a consideration of her work. Miss Baker thought the principal interest in George Eliot's work was her pictures of the England of her own early years, all of which had a personal element; she suffered in and with her characters. Of her place in literature, Miss Baker said that in her best work George Eliot ranked with Dickens in her kindly humour and subtle portrayal of character, but Dickens concerned himself with political problems, while ethics were the chief concern of George Eliot. From the work of these two writers the modern problem novel descended.

Mr. Harry Sargeant (Coventry), followed with a paper on "Some characters and scenes from George Eliot." Mr. Sargeant commenced by describing George Eliot as England's greatest woman novelist, and Adam Bede as her greatest novel. The speaker said, that despite the great strength of Adam Bede's character, he did not attract as many of the others did; he was hard in his judgment of others. The Staffordshire and Derbyshire scenery was the best depicted scenery in George Eliot's work, and the description of "Hayslope" was described by Mr. Sargeant as a masterpiece of beauty. After referring to Mrs. Poyser, Maggie Tulliver, and other characters in the novels, the speaker concluded by saying that nothing could touch us more than George Eliot's intense love of the country.

Votes of thanks were accorded to the speakers on the proposition of Mr. C. Jackson, seconded by Miss Proctor. For the services they had rendered to the meeting, Mr. Moreton and Canon Dodds were thanked by the Chairman and Mr. H. M. Cashmore.

N.W.

SOUTH COAST DIVISION.

A very enjoyable meeting of the Eastern Section took place at Eastbourne, on Friday, April 16th, when Alderman J. Easter, Vice-Chairman of the Eastbourne Public Libraries Committee, presided over a good attendance, representatives being present from Brighton, Hove, Worthing, and Portsmouth. The speaker was Mr. Gilbert Pass, B.A., who gave a most interesting lecture, illustrated with lantern slides, on "St. Joan" the famous play by G. B. Shaw. The lecturer after referring to the length of the epilogue, which he considered might have been omitted altogether, gave a detailed account of Joan's life and trial, and of the state of France at that time. The trial, he said, had by many previous writers been misrepresented, and Shaw in his play proved that it was according to the canons of the time, extremely fair.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Pass, Alderman Easter, Mr. Hardcastle, and the Eastbourne Staff were the recipients of hearty votes of thanks.

The Annual Meeting of the Division will take place at Shanklin, on Friday, July 2nd, when it is hoped as many members as possible will attend. Further particulars will be issued later.

GRACE L. DEAN, *Hon. Secretary.*

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION.

The fourth meeting of the session, on Wednesday, April 21st, consisted of a visit to the works of Messrs. Lever Bros., Soap Manufacturers, at Port Sunlight, followed in the evening by a meeting in the Mayer Library and

Museum, Bebington. Over thirty members, representing libraries of Manchester, Liverpool, Bolton, Stockport, Warrington, Waterloo, Horwich, Birkenhead, etc., attending.

At Lever Bros., the party was introduced to the extremely interesting craft of modern soap-making. The intricate machinery, the vastness of the departments, and the wonderful organisation of such a huge establishment greatly impressed the members. It is interesting to note that the works cover 287 acres, and the model village (not "model" in a post war sense) 260 acres. The lay out of the village, the library, the Lever Art Gallery, the War Memorial, and other numerous attractions of Port Sunlight, were well worthy of a visit allowing much more time.

After tea at the Gladstone Hall the party left for Bebington, where the members enjoyed a stroll in the pretty Mayer Park before assembling in the Mayer Art Gallery and Museum for the meeting.

Mr. J. Harding, Librarian of the Mayer Library, read a very interesting paper on the "Mayer Library and Museum." After telling details of the life of Mr. Mayer, Mr. Harding described the Mayer benefactions, which include the "Mayer Collection of Antiquities" to the Liverpool Museum, and the founding and endowment of the Mayer Library, Museum, and Park, at Bebington. From 1866 up to the date of his death in 1885 Mr. Mayer paid for the entire maintenance of the Library. It was quite interesting to hear that Mr. Mayer frequently helped in the issue of books, and in the still more congenial occupation of handing to lady readers bunches of roses and other flowers from his garden! His gifts are now managed by a body known as "The Mayer Trust."

Numerous questions were asked, to which Mr. Harding genially replied.

After the meeting opportunity was afforded to inspect the library, in which Mr. Harding exhibited for our benefit a small collection of very charming etchings. Light refreshments were very kindly provided by Mr. Harding, and the justice done to these, and the obvious happiness of the party adequately expressed the appreciation of a very enjoyable meeting.

A hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. and Miss Harding, and to all who had contributed to the success of the meeting.

REGINALD HOWARTH, Hon. Sec.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

Fowler (H. W.) A Dictionary of Modern English Usage.
(Oxford Univ. Pr.) 7/6.

A valuable guide to the use of English idiom.

Freeman (John) Herman Melville. (Macmillan) 5/-.
English men of letters series.

Gogol (Nikolay) Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka: short stories. Translated by Constance Garnett.
(Chatto and Windus) 7/6.

Harrison (J.) The Bookbinding Craft and Industry. (Pitmans) 3/-.
A most useful text book, extremely valuable to assistants taking the L.A. examinations.

Kwan (Kikuchi) Tojuro's Love and Four Other Plays. Translated by G. W. Shaw. (The Hokuseido, Tokyo.)

"Kikuchi Kwan is no mere local light. Without the shadow of a mistake, we must recognise him as the Shaw, J. M. Synge or Pirandello of Japan."

Milne (A. A.) Four Plays. (Chatto and Windus) 7/6.

Contents:—To have the honour; Ariadne, or Business first; Portrait of a gentleman in slippers; Success.

Thompson (Sylvia) *The Hounds of Spring*: a novel.

(Heinemann) 7/6.

Warner (S. T.) *Lolly Willowes*: a novel. (Chatto & Windus) 7/6.

Untermeyer (Louis) *Modern American Poetry*. (Cape) 15/-.
A revised and enlarged edition. Contains selections from nearly 150 poets, and each selection has a biographical and critical note.

Wells (G. H.) *The Work of H. G. Wells*: a bibliography, dictionary and subject index, 1887-1925. (Routledge) 12/6.

Wolfe (Humbert) *Humoresque*: poems. (Benn) 6/-.

Arabia Deserta. Our readers' attention is drawn to the note which appeared under this heading, in our last issue, on page 109, as it is quite likely that in the confusion caused by the General Strike the matter was overlooked.

G.F.V.

OUR LIBRARY.

St. Andrews. University Library. *Library Manual*. Compiled by the Librarian. vi. + 114 pp. 6½-in. by 4-in. 1926.

It was decided in January, 1925, to reorganise, recatalogue and classify the library. As the work proceeded and methods and duties were decided on and allotted, the need for a staff manual of instruction became so necessary for smooth working that it was commenced as soon as possible. This compact little book gives in a concise form, the general practice of the library, and in addition, a directory of its contents, together with the scheme of classification, and a list of the library publications. The classification scheme in use is that of the Library of Congress (with modifications) which, incidentally, appears to be gaining a definite foothold in Great Britain. Although this manual is concerned with the organisation of one particular library, and should therefore not be regarded in any sense as a manual of general library practice, there are a number of methods described in its pages that might be examined with advantage.

E.

NEW MEMBERS.

MIDLAND DIVISION.—ASSOCIATES: Miss E. M. Lewis and Miss K. M. Cooks (Birmingham).

APPOINTMENTS.

*J. A. Bailey, Watford Public Library, promoted to Senior Assistant at £90-£100 per annum by increments of £10, *vice* R. C. Sayell.

*J. Crawley, Sunderland Public Libraries, to be Deputy Librarian.

*D. D. Nichols, Chief Assistant, Woolwich Public Libraries, to be Deputy Librarian, Stockport Public Library.

*Miss D. E. Procter, Reference Library, Birmingham, to an Assistant, Toronto Public Libraries.

*R. C. Sayell, Watford Public Library, promoted to Chief Assistant at £150-£200 per annum by £10, *vice* Miss Cockcroft resigned, May 10th, 1926.

*W. H. Smettem, Deputy Librarian, Sunderland Public Libraries, to be Chief Librarian, Chesterfield Public Library.

* Member A.A.L.